



Department of Justice

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**ST. PETERS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES**

ST. LOUIS, Missouri - Jason Bertholf pled guilty to federal charges of possession of child pornography, U.S. Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway, of the Eastern District of Missouri announced today.

During a June 2006 investigation to identify computers and subjects distributing child pornography, St. Charles County police officers identified an Internet Protocol (IP) address of a computer which they believed was sharing child pornography files using a file sharing software program. The officers determined that Bertholf of St. Peters, Missouri, was subscribing to the IP address.

On August 17, 2006, an FBI agent and a St. Charles County detective went to Bertholf's residence in St. Peters to investigate further. During the interview, Bertholf admitted that he downloaded child pornography images and movies. Investigators seized the computer, and a forensic examination confirmed that the computer contained child pornography, i.e. images of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Bertholf, 25, Oak Knoll Road, St. Peters, Missouri, pled guilty to one felony count of possession of child pornography. Bertholf now faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and/or fines up to \$250,000. Sentencing has been set for August 3, 2007.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

Hanaway commended the work on the case by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Missouri Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the Regional Computer Crimes Education and Enforcement Group, and Assistant United States Attorney Reginald Harris, who is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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